
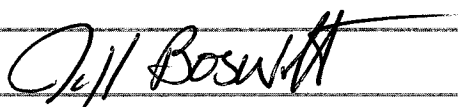



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California - Child and Family Services Review Signature Sheet

For submittal of: CSA ☐ SIP ☐ Progress Report ☒

County	Sierra
SIP Period Dates	03/30/2015-03/30/2020
Outcome Data Period	Quarter 2/2014
County Child Welfare Agency Director	
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Signature*	
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Mailing Address	Department of Health and Human Services Post Office Box 7 Loyalton, California 96118
County Chief Probation Officer	
Name	Jeff Bosworth
Signature*	
Phone Number	530-289-3277
Mailing Address	Sierra County Probation Department 100 Courthouse Square Second Floor Downieville, CA 95936
Public Agency Designated to Administer CAPIT and CBCAP	
Name	Darden Bynum
Signature*	
Phone Number	530-993-6721

Mail the original Signature Sheet to:

\*Signatures must be in blue ink

Children's Services Outcomes and Accountability Bureau  
Attention: Bureau Chief  
Children and Family Services Division  
California Department of Social Services  
744 P Street, MS 8-12-91  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Mailing Address	Department of Health & Human Services Post Office Box 7 Loyalton, California 96118
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Board of Supervisors (BOS) Signature	
BOS Approval Date	
Name	
Signature*	

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Public Agency Administering CAPIT and CBCAP (if other than Child Welfare)	Name	
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# California - Child and Family Services Review

## **Annual SIP Progress Report**

**MARCH 30, 2015 – MARCH 30, 2020**



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## Introduction

### **BACKGROUND – CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW (CFSR)**

As the Social Security Act (SSA) was amended in 1994, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services was authorized to review the consistency of State child and family service programs' with the requirements of Titles IV-B and Title IV-E of the SSA through the Children's Bureau. In 2000, the Federal Children's Bureau initiated the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR). This is when the Federal government began to evaluate State child welfare service programs using performance based outcome measures. Prior to that, States had been monitored solely by looking at indicators of processes which were associated with how child welfare services were provided. The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) of 1997 influenced review expectations. Ultimately, the goal of the CFSR is to help states achieve consistent improvement in child welfare services delivery and outcomes essential to the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and their families.

### **CALIFORNIA – CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW (C-CFSR)**

The C-CFSR, an outcomes-based review mandated by the Child Welfare System Improvement and Accountability Act (Assembly Bill 636) was passed by California State legislature in 2001 and was initiated the next year. The C-CFSR cycle is completed by each county at least once every five years. Each cycle begins with the completion of a County Self-Assessment (CSA) and System Improvement Plan (SIP). As a State-County partnership, this accountability system is an enhanced version of the Federal oversight system mandated by Congress to monitor states' performance. This process is designed to allow each county, in collaboration with their community partners, to perform an in-depth assessment of Child Welfare Services (which is referred to as Child Protective Services (CPS) in Sierra County) and Juvenile Probation programs in their county. Sierra County's C-CFSR cycle is March 30, 2015, through March 30, 2020. This process is supported through the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Children's Services Outcomes and Accountability Bureau (CSOAB) and Office of Child Abuse Prevention Bureau (OCAP)

The Sierra County C-CFSR team initially began with co-chairs Sierra County Health and Human Services (H&HS) Director Darden Bynum, former CSOAB consultants David Brownstein and Lisa Botzler, and former OCAP Consultant Theresa Sanchez. Throughout this C-CFSR cycle, other important team members include: Sierra County H&HS Assistant Director Lea Salas, Sierra County H&HS Interdepartmental Fiscal Officer Judy Blakney, Sierra County H&HS Consultant Suzanne Nobles, as well as UC Davis – Northern Regional Training Academy (RTA) consultants Jessica Iford and Nancy Hafer. This team planned and supported both the two-day Peer Review event held during the week of October 28, 2014, and the one-day stakeholder event held on



November 5, 2014. The important information collected at these events supports the writing of the CSA, and guides us throughout the C-CFSR process. For various reasons, the C-CFSR team has changed since the initial group. Previous CDSS team supports have included the following: former CSOAB Consultants Joti Bolina and Norma Zuniga and former OCAP Consultant Irma Munoz. Sierra County sees the team not as a stagnate group, but rather changing as County's needs change.

The current make-up of the C-CFSR team is H&HS Director Darden Bynum, Assistant Director Lea Salas, Interdepartmental Fiscal Officer Judy Blakney, Administrative Officer Marianne Moseley, Social Worker Supervisor Lisa Botzler, CDSS CSOAB Consultant Heather Pankiw and CDSS OCAP Consultant Anthony Bennet. Because Sierra County programs work so closely together, Eligibility Supervisor Lori McGee, Public Health Nurse Shanna Anseth, and Behavioral Health/MHSA Coordinator Laurie Marsh also participate as requested. CPS and MHSA share many of the same stakeholders. These meetings will be scheduled on a quarterly basis.

### **COUNTY SELF-ASSESSMENT (CSA) AND PEER REVIEW**

The intent of the CSA is to evaluate both quantitative and qualitative analysis of child welfare data. Quantitative data can be collected in various ways. CDSS utilizes UC-Berkeley's (UCB) California Child Welfare Indicators Project (CCWIP<sup>1</sup>). Because we have a very small out-of-home care population, it can be difficult to maintain anonymity when identifying markers are utilized in analysis and report writing. Providing data which would include ethnic group, age group and/or gender could easily allow out-of-care youth and individuals to be identified. It also can be difficult to recognize a trend or relevant data. For example the new Federal Outcome Measure P5: Placement Stability - "Of all children who enter foster care in a 12-month period, what is the rate of placement moves per day of foster care?" The national standard for this measure is performance less than or equal to 4.12 per 1,000. Currently our measure is 9.09. Throughout the time measured we have had three children in care. If all children had remained in care, it would have taken us a year before we would have seen any meaningful results. If permanency was achieved or a child moved to a concurrent placement, because of our low numbers, it would appear to be negative moves when in fact they are positive. Providing the explanation of our current number in this report will make it possible to identify the children just based on demographic information.

Qualitative data is collected through the Peer Review which gathers issue-specific information through an interview and in the case of Sierra County a case file review was an additional part of the Peer Review. Reviewers are peer experts from surrounding counties. The

<sup>1</sup> Webster, D., Armijo, M., Lee, S., Dawson, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Putnam-Hornstein, E., King, B., Rezvani, G., Wagstaff, K., Sandoval, A., Yee, H., Xiong, B., Benton, C., Hoerl, C., & Romero, R. (2016). *CCWIP reports*. Retrieved 1/12/2016, from University of California at Berkeley California Child Welfare Indicators Project website. URL: <[http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb\\_childwelfare](http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare)>

stakeholder meetings also gather qualitative information. The Peer Review, intensive case worker interviews, and community stakeholder focus groups helped to recognize program strength, as well as those areas in which improvement was needed. As the beginning of the cycle, the CSA sets out to provide a road map for CPS and Juvenile Probation to enhance current programs while possibly creating new programs to meet unmet needs. The information gathered during the CSA is the basis for identified county focus areas and where to maximize funds to achieve positive outcomes for children and families. The CSA provides rationale for the expenditure of Federal and State funds: Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF), Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (CAPIT) and Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) programs. These funds support C-CFSR outcome improvement efforts.

CPS and Juvenile Probation must review systematic and community factors which correspond to the Federal review. This information is collected for each step of the C-CFSR process. Sierra County's most recent CSA was completed in June of 2015, and SIP goals and strategies were identified and developed based on the findings in that CSA. Sierra County Juvenile Probation does not participate in the Title IV-E program which allowed for their non-participation in the Peer Review Process (See CSA p. 4 & SIP Attachment 1). If a placement were to occur, Juvenile Probation could choose to use Title IV-E funding and a plan would be submitted. Although they do not currently utilize these funds, their input in the SIP and CSA is significant. Our efforts are built upon the need to improve collaboration and increase resources for families in our County despite the limitations and challenges Northern California small rural counties face. The commitment of both CPS and Juvenile Probation Staff, and the support of our programs and community partners, have been essential to our progress and will continue to be the foundation of our ability to protect children from abuse and neglect in Sierra County while strengthening our families and community.

## **SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SIP)**

The CSA provided us a new understanding of the culture, needs and expectations of families and the community. The SIP, created from the CSA, is the operational agreement between the CDSS and the county. This document is a live document which describes how the county will change their system of care for children and families through improvement and/or enhancement of existing programs. Because the SIP is a live document, it allows for change and will be revised as barriers and/or challenges are identified. All significant changes will be taken to the County Board of Supervisors (BOS) for approval. In Sierra County the CPS Social Worker Supervisor is the responsible party for coordinating and submitting the C-CFSR. Because of our small size, we are fortunate to effortlessly engage CPS front-line staff, juvenile probation officers, and community partners in the creation of the SIP as well as working the plan. Because the County works so closely with other programs and departments, many decisions are not made without collaborating with their teams.



Our SIP explains priority areas identified for improvement, determines who should be involved in the processes in making these improvements, as well as identifies barriers and challenges which might need to be addressed throughout the progression of the plan. The SIP also shapes where our concentration of staff and/or funds should be utilized. Allowable services and activities are implemented or enhanced as strategies or action steps. The selection of programs or areas of focus in the SIP may be a shift from existing focus or programs in the County. The SIP provides explanation to how programs and services funded with CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF funds will address CPS and Juvenile Probation prioritized needs. It is then approved, signed by County BOS and submitted to CSOAB and OCAP.

### **ANNUAL SIP PROGRESS REPORT**

This Annual Progress Report and all that will follow provide the work plan (SIP) progress and continuation of the plan. In consultation with the CDSS, CPS and Juvenile Probation continue to be the lead County agencies for submitting the Annual Progress Report. As stated before, in our County, the responsibility of coordinating and submitting the C-CFSR documents is the CPS Social Worker Supervisor.

Like the CSA and SIP, the Annual Progress Report includes a written analysis of current quantitative and qualitative performance. Over time, this information defines SIP strategies and action steps effectiveness in achieving expected change. Our Annual Report provides documented updates and progress of SIP strategies and action steps. While implementing strategies, the County identifies recurring opportunities for sharing progress, barriers and challenges and adjustments to strategies through collaboration with stakeholders. Because this is a live document, this is an appropriate time to amend or modify the SIP. New strategies and/or areas of focus may be added and changed in the plan. Sierra County describes any significant reduction of spending for any program identified in the SIP, as well as any discontinuance of programs required by statute. Although Sierra County submits the Annual Progress Report which includes OCAP funding documentation and communicates with our OCAP Consultant, we are also required to file an annual report for the CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF Programs.

The SIP does not include strategies specifically assigned to Probation since Probation does not participate in the Title IV-E as mentioned above. They do provide participation in the way of stakeholders. They hold seats in many of the same community boards as CPS and support CPS in many ways. Many of the CPS programs may inadvertently affect youth on the Probation case load. For example, families referred by SARB for preservation services or parenting classes may be probation youth who are living at home. Their input and communication regarding services is essential.

## **QUARTERLY OUTCOME AND ACCOUNTABILITY DATA REPORTS & SYSTEMIC FACTORS**

The CDSS and UCB provide quarterly quantitative data reports generated by UCB-CCWIP from information collected through California's Child Welfare Administrative Data System (CWS/CMS). These quarterly reports include outcomes related to safety, permanency and well-being for each county in California. The CDSS and counties utilize these reports to track county performance over time. This same data can be used to analyze policies and procedures. As previously mentioned we have such a small out-of-home population, it is our responsibility to review data and provide reports without disclosing a family or individual when identifying markers are provided.

Systemic assessment of program strengths and limitations can be identified in order to improve service delivery. Sierra County does review and analyze the data provided by the CDSS and UCB, but we chose to focus mainly on systemic factors during this SIP. These include: staff, caregiver and service provider training; agency collaboration; service array; and a quality assurance system which includes the County case review system. As we work our SIP plan, information will be obtained allowing us to make informed decisions about future programs, goals, strategies, and community partnerships as well as identify necessary patterns and any necessary systemic changes.

## **SIP Progress Narrative**

### **STAKEHOLDERS PARTICIPATION**

During this SIP cycle year, Sierra County invited several stakeholders to participate in what was intended to be regularly scheduled meetings to address SIP strategies. After a couple of meetings, it was recognized the group was driven to discuss other, more immediate concerns which could be addressed very quickly by the group. For example, the Food Pantry had been in need of help during days food was distributed. Quickly the group worked to strategize to get this done. Now Sierra County Public Health and Sierra County Eligibility provide outreach to the community during food distribution time. Targeted program information is disseminated by providing publications to recipients and 1:1 when appropriate. Laurie Marsh, MHSA Coordinator also used this meeting venue to discuss a survey in which she will use to create the MHSA Community Plan. This group became a Task Group and no longer meets regularly. If a need arises, any member of the group can initiate a meeting. The C-CFSR team plans to bring the group together at a minimum of one time quarterly each year to discuss the SIP progress. It is the goal of H&HS to draw on information collected through other program stakeholder outreach in order to fully understand the community and identify the best use of funds and services. Anne Reugebrinker, Public Health Educator - Tobacco Reduction, has conducted Public Opinion Polls on E-cigarettes. The results of these polls have not yet been published.

The Task Group met at the Juvenile Probation office on June 18 and June 30, 2015, as well as August 6, 2015. Participants included: Cathy Morrell and Tammy Muldoon (FRC), Celia Sutton-Pado and Shanna Anseth (Public Health), Jeff Bosworth, Chuck Henson and Rebecca Dunsing (Juvenile Probation), Judy Blakney (H&HS Fiscal), Lea Salas (H&HS Assistant Director), Lori McGee (Eligibility), Mary Wright (Sierra County Child Care Council/ PSSF Collaborative), Merrill Grant (Sierra County Superintendent of Schools), Mike Filippini (Sierra County First 5), Pam Filippini (Toddler Towers), Laurie Marsh (MHSA Coordinator).

In addition to these formal organized meetings, CPS continues to participate in community meetings with stakeholders such as the Student Attendance Review Board (SARB), Sierra County First 5, the FRC board meeting and the Child Abuse Prevent Council Board meeting. Members of the C-CFSR team meet on a 1:1 basis with stakeholders to discuss needs of both CPS and the stakeholders. The C-CFSR team used the information collected at the Task Group meetings, community meetings, information gathered from other program stakeholders, and 1:1 meetings, to write the Annual Progress Report.

## **CURRENT PERFORMANCE TOWARDS SIP IMPROVEMENT GOALS**

### **PRIORITY OUTCOME MEASURE OR SYSTEMIC FACTOR : STAFF, CAREGIVER AND SERVICE PROVIDER TRAINING**

Because Sierra County chose to address systemic factors rather than Federal Outcome Measures during this SIP cycle, analysis of these Baseline and Improvement Goals will be written somewhat differently than most SIP Annual Reports. In an effort to prevent repetition, the Data Analysis which would usually follow each Target Improvement Goal listed below will be brief and more detailed explanation will be included in the "STATUS OF STRATEGIES SECTION".

**CSA Baseline Performance:** Sierra County is not providing training to caregivers or service providers. Staff missed approximately two Core trainings held out of County each in 2014 due to weather and/or insufficient staff coverage.

**Target Improvement Goal:** Sierra County will increase the number of contracted UC Davis training from 6 to 10 in 2015. Of these 10 trainings, a minimum of 2 trainings will be offered to Stakeholders each year. Additionally, Sierra County will offer two non-UC Davis contracted trainings to staff and Stakeholders each year. Staff will miss no more than one training each year due to travel or insufficient office coverage.

**Data Analysis:** Sierra County has seen an increase in trainings for all involved. The UC Davis Contract has been increased in addition to other trainings which have been brought into the county and shared with the public and other H&HS programs. CPS has participated in the following trainings: Being Effective with Difficult People, Preparing Employees for Success, Tools for Successful Communication, Trust Building for Teams – Understanding Team Unity, and No Wrong Door – Collaborating More Like Doormen than Gatekeepers. The No Wrong Door

training included a large number of stakeholders and was mentioned as one of the most appreciated trainings provided so far.

**PRIORITY OUTCOME MEASURE OR SYSTEMIC FACTOR: AGENCY COLLABORATION**

**CSA Baseline Performance:** Sierra County currently collaborates with Toddler Towers and High Sierra Family Resource Center.

**Target Improvement Goal:** Sierra County will increase the number of collaborative partnerships by a minimum of one agency per year until year 2020.

**Data Analysis:** Sierra County has not seen an increase in partnership; however, we have seen improvement in existing relationships.

**PRIORITY OUTCOME MEASURE OR SYSTEMIC FACTOR: SERVICE ARRAY**

**CSA Baseline Performance:** Current hours of operation at the FRC are 26-31 hours a week.

**Target Improvement Goal:** The facility will maintain one full time staff with a minimum of two part-time staff by year 2017. By the end of this SIP cycle, 2020, the FRC will be open for operation at a minimum of 35 hours a week.

**Data Analysis:** The FRC does not have not increased hours, nor have they increased programs. They have reached out to a consultant with the intent to grow their agency.

**PRIORITY OUTCOME MEASURE OR SYSTEMIC FACTOR: Quality Assurance System**

**CSA Baseline Performance:** Sierra County currently has no quality assurance system.

**Target Improvement Goal:** Sierra County will have a County employee who has completed all trainings for the State initiated Case Review System by December 2015. Sierra County will review all cases selected by the State for review each year during this SIP cycle. Ninety-five percent (95%) of the CPS caseload files (which includes cases and referrals) with the exception of those chosen for the State Case Review System will have a Desk Review which consists of a review of everything in the paper and/or electronic file.

**Data Analysis:** Sierra County has not increased the number of community partners; however, we have seen improvement in existing relationships.

## Status of Strategies

### STRATEGY 1: IMPROVE COMMUNITY PERCEPTION OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

#### ANALYSIS

This strategy affects all three chosen systemic factors: Quality Assurance, Agency Collaboration and Service Array. Sierra County H&HS is addressing the negative perception the

community has of our agency. It has been noted it is not CPS alone, but other H&HS departments which are seen in a negative light as well. It might also be important to recognize that the negative perception is not held by individual residents alone; it also represents the opinions of professionals and agencies, businesses and companies within the County. At times, the impact of this negative perception has affected a social worker's ability to provide services. As the five year SIP progresses, Sierra County will continue to work hard to change the community perception of H&HS.

Sierra County is focusing on improving print and electronic media which is provided or made accessible to the public and how it is provided, trainings have increased and are offered to the community, staff participation in community meetings and events has increased, and more accessibility to staff on the west side of the County has begun. No mandated reporter trainings have been held at the time of the writing of this report.



helping people

A new logo has been adopted by H&HS. It is the commitment of H&HS to help people. Other changes in letterhead and the website will begin after our vision and mission statements have been created. Although we are waiting to update the website to include the new vision and mission statements, we have begun to provide links to State documents: CSA, SIP, IHSS QA/QI on our County H&HS website. We will continue to include other State reports as they are created.

H&HS is becoming more recognizable in the community. Sierra County Public Health and Sierra County Eligibility provide outreach to the community during food distribution time at the FRC. Social Workers are available as needed. We take advantage of this time to provide publications to participants and are available for 1:1 conversations. A "Happy Holidays" from H&HS notice was placed in the local paper. More public relations efforts will be made to continue to provide contact information and service announcements. We are in the planning stages of an open house during National Foster Care Awareness month. We intend to provide information on relative/kinship placement and foster care placement hoping to address the need of emergency placement in the county. We will also provide information on adoption. This will be accompanied with an informational article in the local papers.

H&HS is building a lending library in which will be located in the Public Health office. The lending library will include many types of media to meet family and staff needs. Computer parenting programs have been identified. There are DVDs on heart health and DVDs on breastfeeding which encourage including the father. Purchased books include professional studies and self care, books on healthy parenting and other important subjects. Children's books are available while visiting in the office and to check out. A check-out system will be created which will include confidentiality of borrowers. The idea is to have these books available to both our families and us. Staff can encourage families to utilize books based on

identified needs and/or requests. The books have been placed on book trucks so they can be moved to where the individual is. The library will continue to grow from requests from staff and from families. A similar process or a reading list will be available in Downieville for the families and professionals in that office.

Part of public perception includes services available in all parts of the county. It is difficult to provide optional services in other parts of the County. This will continue to be a goal for us. Staffing the Downieville office is important. The goal is to have a social worker at a minimum of three days a week in the Downieville office. At this time, due to inability to connect to CWS/CMS, it is difficult to work in the office. One of our social workers began working in the office and quickly saw a response to her presence and an increase in individuals requesting help in that area. Once the CWS/CMS system becomes available, the social workers and the social worker supervisor will work in the Downieville office on a rotating basis.

#### **ACTION STEP STATUS**

All Action Steps have occurred within the timeline as outlined in the SIP.

#### **METHOD OF EVALUATION AND/OR MONITORING**

This will be measured and monitored through increased positive contact with the community. This may be from person to person contact, survey of program participants and collaterals as well as increased participation in trainings and their evaluation responses. H&HS participation in community meetings has increased. CPS is offering items on agendas of community meetings. CPS staff may have been on committees, but participation was low or absent. If a designated staff is unable to attend a community meeting, a representative is identified to represent CPS. If an attendance is not possible due to schedules or location, an email is sent prior to the meeting explaining the absence, offering an update on CPS programs and staff.

#### **ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES (WHEN APPLICABLE)**

The addition of Public Relations activities such as an open house in May has been added to the strategies. No other Strategies have been added.

#### **PROGRAM REDUCTION**

Not applicable.

### **STRATEGY 2: COLLABORATE WITH OTHER HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMS/AGENCIES**

#### **ANALYSIS**

This strategy affects two chosen systemic factors: Quality Assurance and Agency Collaboration. Sierra County has a strong working relationship with Eligibility which includes CalWorks. This relationship has been further strengthened by increased cross training. Joint



staff meetings have not yet begun; however, at this time the supervisors meet regularly and share information. Any time relevant information is provided to one program, the supervisor from that program ensures the other program has the information also. Staff from Eligibility, Public Health, Behavioral Health and Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) has participated in more home visits which have proven to be invaluable in staffing and case management.

Red Teams and Green Teams have been initiated. The Red Team is designed to quickly crisis problem solve family incidents, for example, risk of removal due to current investigation. The goal is to create a team of individuals from all H&HS program. Because the Red Team is urgent, it is not always possible to get all necessary staff present. Supervisors and all staff working with the family in need will be invited to the meeting. The goal is to discuss supports already in place and identify those that can immediately be added to increase the likelihood of maintaining the family in the home. Recently a Red Team was held following a Mandated Reporter Referral which included two families at 4:00 pm two days before a long weekend holiday. This meeting included all program supervisors who were present that day, H&HS Assistant Director and H&HS Director as well as the CPS social workers and the Edibility staff directly assigned to the families. CPS staff gained knowledge that assisted in determining a "bottom line" for the family prior to meeting with them. It also allowed for planning over the weekend in the event something were to occur after hours. All parties walked away knowing their next steps.

The Green Team is less crisis oriented and can be scheduled meetings. This Team would come together when one program already working with the family may be "stuck". This meeting may be a Family Safety Mapping comprised of professionals only or something less structured. The goal of this Team is to discuss supports already in place and identify those that are needed, but rather than immediate crisis management, a plan is put into place that involves action steps over a period of time for all appropriate programs which will assist the family. This approach provides a more family whole services approach.

Sierra County is still researching the intricate details to initiate a multidisciplinary team which includes outside agencies. There is a need for several of these types of teams, Child Fatality, for example. It is our intent to identify team members who are appropriate for each team in an effort to prevent the creation of many teams. An MOU has been created between CPS and Behavioral Health to address youth who may be in the Katie A. subclass or those who are at risk of becoming a part of this subgroup. Once multidisciplinary team policies and procedures are created, appropriate agreements will be created and signed.

Sierra County is updating policies and procedures for sharing information and working as teams across disciplines and through partnerships as need arises at this time. CPS requests Release of Information Forms (ROI) be signed for all possible programs by parents as soon as the family begins working with CPS. Eligibility and Behavioral Health also have families sign ROIs

if they are aware of CPS involvement. Those assigned to assist the family will ideally begin to meet regularly as new cross program/agency needs are identified to ensure everyone has all of the same information. This may include Eligibility, children and adult programs, Public Health, Behavioral Health and/or AOD staff. Dependent upon the family needs this may or may not include a supervisor. Staff has increased joint visits which show the family all of our programs are working jointly which is a benefit to the family.

RTA continues to provide SOP coaching for CPS staff. Although we have not had coaching in County since the spring of 2015, our coach has provided support by email and telephone. These in County meetings are scheduled to begin again in January of 2016. Because we have missed several months, CPS has requested coaching in Sierra County occur more than one time monthly. The Lassen County CPS Program Manager has reached out to the social worker supervisor and invited Sierra County CPS to Lassen County coaching meetings which allows for cross-county training. This will be additional support for our social workers and social worker supervisor. Sierra and Lassen County share the same coach which will allow for easier communication between social workers from two different counties creating peer support which is missing in Sierra County due to the small number of social workers. This also creates a new support for the social worker supervisor when questions arise and Sierra County either does not have the necessary services or is experiencing something new for the county. CPS social workers are practicing SOP in the field although no partner agencies have had the opportunity to participate. When referrals are made, the social worker supervisor and/or social workers provide a brief explanation of how our services work and how we may intervene. This provides the caller a simplistic version of SOP. The new referral forms have SOP language to prompt questions and a Screening Topics desk manual has been created. SOP questions have been separated into types of abuse and questions to prompt social workers are listed below.

**ACTION STEP STATUS**

All Action Steps have occurred within the timeline as outlined in the SIP.

**METHOD OF EVALUATION AND/OR MONITORING**

This will be monitored through surveying family participants and collaterals, and/or monthly collaborative meeting participation and reports. There will also be continual conversation of partners to assure all agency needs are being met. The addition of new collaborative partners is another way success will be monitored.

**ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES (WHEN APPLICABLE)**

No additional Strategies have been created at this time.

**PROGRAM REDUCTION**

Not Applicable.

### STRATEGY 3: INITIATE A QUALITY ASSURANCE/QUALITY IMPROVEMENT (QA/QI) PLAN

#### ANALYSIS

This strategy affects all three chosen systemic factors: Quality Assurance, Agency Collaboration and Service Array. The Department has expressed the need for QA/QI to monitor OCAP funds and programs. An invoice system was initiated last year through the Fiscal Department; however, due to changes in the OCAP reporting system, these invoices may need to be modified or a separate CPS reporting system may need to be developed to assist in providing accurate information for the OCAP Annual Report.

An active effort is being made to strengthen existing working relationships which will allow for better communication and monitoring of services provided. Creating a standard QA/QI system to monitor OCAP funds is included in this strategy. It is believed this will improve Sierra County programs and services which are provided to the community.

The social worker supervisor along with administration and the social workers are documenting unaddressed concerns and identifying appropriate processes which will enhance current services. A new intake form has been created, Court reports and Findings and Orders templates have been identified and/or created. The use of SOP Circles of Safety is used from the beginning of an investigation. The idea is to identify family supports and increase the supports outside of professionals and encouraging families to reach out to their natural supports. In the event a child is removed from the home, it will make determining relative/kinship placement easier. This is very important since Sierra County only has two foster homes in the county. One is used as an emergency home by Mountain Circle. Environmental Alternatives has a home in Sierra County, but it is currently full.

An emergency relative/kinship placement procedure has been put into place in the event a child is removed from their home. Child care, multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA), Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), and any other cultural needs for children and family coming into care are taken into consideration throughout Sierra County processes. Sierra County has been reaching out and networking with other counties to identify their processes that can be adopted or changed to fit Sierra County's needs. Coaching meetings in Lassen County will increase our understanding of other county policies and processes. County only forms will continue to be created to fit the needs of the social workers. A referral check list was identified in the SIP as a potential need. Since that time, because the need was indeed there, a check list has been created. A case closure check list, a face sheet, and a case file order forms have also been established. We are in the process of improving our home visits and documentation using SOP three questions: What are we worried about? What is working? What needs to happen next? To assist with consistency and to prevent documents that need to be filed becoming a pile on someone's desk, the Administrative Assistant is now filing for social workers. These small changes are a part of an ongoing process Sierra County is committed to making. Sierra County will continue to monitor all existing processes and will revise and/or develop new policy and a procedure as the SIP cycle progresses; however, the Department will not be focusing on policy and procedures as a SIP strategy.

A staff member was identified to complete the State Case Review training and become certified. Because this person did not complete the certification, more training is necessary. Since that time, the State has identified one Sierra County case file for review. Rather than continuing to pursue certification, Sierra County has chosen to partner with another county for completion of this year's case review. This decision was made at the time of the writing of this report. No agreement has yet been made, and the MOU has yet to be written and signed. A change was made to the SIP Chart to note revisiting the Case Review training for the same Sierra County staff member in July of 2016.

The purpose of the Desk Review is to provide information for consistent case management and program uniformity, as well as assure compliance with State and County CPS regulations. Additionally, the Desk Review confirms the information in the case record accurately reflects the family's current circumstances. The Desk Review forms have not yet been created since we are still creating forms as mentioned above to provide consistency and staff still needs to be trained on each form. There will be a focus on day to day procedures, use of county only forms, and other case documentation such as SDM which was identified as a need to be addressed during the Peer Review. The date for implementation in the SIP chart has been moved to July of 2016 to allow for identification of other necessary forms through coaching sessions and day to day use of CWS/CMS and SDM.

At this time, the Desk Reviews are completed by the social worker supervisor informally throughout various steps of the case. It is evident we are still learning and identifying steps we have missed, or are not timely. Review results have included recommended correction and/or improvement activities. The social worker supervisor and the social worker staff all Desk Reviews. At this time, no additional correction and improvement activities have required a plan of action.

Toddler Towers has provided CPS a copy of a survey they request families complete. While FRC works with Strategies, it is anticipated they will create a measuring system, but unsure if it will be a survey or other another measurement tool.

#### **ACTION STEP STATUS**

The Case Review and Desk Review Action Steps have been modified as listed above. All other Action Steps have occurred within the timeline as outlined in the SIP.

#### **METHOD OF EVALUATION AND/OR MONITORING**

The success of the Case Review System will be monitored by the ability to meet State expectations and the ability to address any concerns identified in the individual reviews. The Case Review System and the Desk Review will identify any need for staff training and policy clarification.

Direct family participation with the FRC and Toddler Towers who utilize OCAP funds will

be monitored through surveying family participants and collaterals, and/or monthly collaborative meeting participation and reports. There will also be continual conversation of partners to assure programs funded by OCAP are meeting all agency needs. In the event the partnering agency identifies needs not recognized by the Department, this information will be shared and analyzed to determine how best to meet the need. The addition of new collaborative partners is another way success will be monitored.

**ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES (WHEN APPLICABLE)**

No additional Strategies have been created at this time.

**PROGRAM REDUCTION**

Not applicable.

**STRATEGY 4: EXPAND SERVICE ARRAY PROVIDED TO COMMUNITY**

**ANALYSIS**

This strategy will affect all three chosen systemic factors: Quality Assurance, Agency Collaboration and Service Array. Sierra County, like many small counties, has limited resources. From meetings with Stakeholders, it is apparent many resources have “vanished” or “drifted away” over the years. It also seems the poor perception of H&HS and poor relationships with community members and agencies has made it difficult to maintain programs.

The FRC and Toddler Towers are the two programs in Sierra County that currently provide services to children and families. Toddler Towers’ activities are much more defined. The FRC activities, on the other hand, are much more varied and fluid. At one point, communication between CPS and the FRC diminished and at times, even now, appears strained. This has contributed to the FRC curriculum becoming outdated, programs designed to meet community needs have shifted without the Department knowing, and lack in evidence-based/evidence-informed programs. FRC operational hours have greatly reduced over the years, which in turn have caused the activities in the community to clearly reduce.

CPS has begun to collaborate with other H&HS programs to enhance and develop programs that could reach to a wider audience. For example, the school has a Student Attendance Review Board (SARB). At the end of the school year, the Board entertained suggestions for improvement. CPS suggested a H&HS intervention referral system be initiated for those placed on the “watch list”. This intervention could prevent a child/youth from moving from the “watch list” to the SARB list. MHSA is interested in creating an Attendance Advocate position. By partnering with MHSA to develop a form, the referrals could be made to the appropriate provider. This is only one example of inter-program partnering that could occur.

To increase capacity for the FRC and MHSA activities, it was the intent for Sierra County to submit an AmeriCorp application in 2016. Because the FRC is utilizing a consultant, this

Action Step has been removed from this strategy in order to allow the FRC to identify and respond to their needs as they have determined through their consultant activities. That is not to say in the future CPS might not partner with another entity such as MHSA to apply and fund other identified programs and services. It could also assist in job training and encouraging those hired to continue to higher education which would open the door for partnering with Eligibility.

The lending library described above increases our services to the public. It helps provide parenting education for those who are unable to attend classes or uncomfortable to attend classes. It will also provide parenting education to individuals who have not come to our attention. Family relationships are a focus of MHSA and one which is important to CPS. Reading with children and building stronger parenting skills will increase family relationships. A lending library has been discussed in the past, but has not come to realization. Staff has been excited to hear the library will now be available to them and those they serve.

#### **ACTION STEP STATUS**

The AmeriCorp application has been deleted from the SIP Chart. All other Action Steps have occurred within the timeline as outlined in the SIP.

#### **METHOD OF EVALUATION AND/OR MONITORING**

This strategy will be measured by implementation and participation of new programs, or revitalizing old programs that were successful. Once programs are initiated, they will be monitored on a continual basis by program and participant surveys and focus groups. Program specific evidence based and evidence informed tools will be used to measure the success of those programs. The Task Force will be an on-going source of feedback for the use of existing programs and the need for enhancing or creating new programs and will be asked to meet at a minimum of one time a year. Increased referrals for services provided by the FRC and an increase in referrals from SARB will also indicate the success of the program. The Task Force will be an on-going source of feedback for the use of existing programs and the need for enhancing or creating new programs and will be asked to meet at a minimum of one time a year.

#### **ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES (WHEN APPLICABLE)**

No additional Strategies have been created at this time.

#### **PROGRAM REDUCTION**

Not applicable.

### **STRATEGY 5: INCREASE SERVICES PROVIDED BY FRC AND OCAP FUNDS**

#### **ANALYSIS**

This strategy will affect all three chosen systemic factors: Quality Assurance, Agency Collaboration and Service Array. CPS and the MHSA are having active exciting meetings and conversations to identify the appropriate curriculum parenting programs. Curriculum has been



narrowed down to seven. A comparison will be made with the anticipation of a curriculum decision by February 1, 2016. Sierra County plans to identify a minimum of two staff to participate in any "Train the Trainer" programs available for the parenting curriculum.

Sierra County acknowledges limited resources available to families in our community. This includes limited providers, services and programs. Sierra County recognizes the potential of individuals within our community who may be able to provide services, yet not be connected to an agency. It is our goal to increase capacity of existing providers while supporting the opportunity to develop new providers. We wish to create new programs and possibly new agencies that are able to provide desired services. We embrace the opportunity to grow as a community. An advertisement will be placed in local newspapers describing a contract bid process which will be open to individuals and agencies who are interested in providing parenting programs in Sierra County.

It will be important when purchasing curriculum and developing programs H&HS consider multigenerational and whole health programs. These programs could include support groups, yoga classes, developing a place to teach independent living skills such as budgeting and grocery shopping to name a few to be taught to both children/youth and adults. Other whole health programs might include exercise such as yoga or Frisbee golf or perhaps nutrition and cooking. The FRC has had a cooking class in the past that taught nutrition. This class may be initiated again or adopted by another agency and used to address the need to develop healthy living and/or independent living skills for all members of the community. Support of this program has been identified at various meetings in which our stakeholders participate including SARB and MHSA.

CPS has provided funding in a new way to the FRC by utilizing CWSOIP funds as well as support training for staff and the community. Conversations with the FRC have also included an expansion into the west side of the County by identifying a common location where services could be provided by the FRC. The FRC has reached out to isolated families and is interested in finding new ways to serve this population. By advertising publically for providers of these services, a building may not be identified in the west side of the County, but services can still be provided. MHSA and CPS will continue to discuss options for the west side.

Implementation of a Differential Response program was included as an Action Step in this Strategy. At this time, because we anticipate changes with the FRC, we have deleted this Action Step. We are making an effort to have alternative responses and as mentioned above, this may, in the future, include other agencies and/or individuals.

A need identified in the CSA was community activities for youth (See CSA p. 13, 14, 60, 73, 108 and 110). FRC had an after school program in the past. CPS and the FRC agreed to bring this program back to life for Fall 2015. The FRC was unable to increase the number of open

hours which would allow for this program. This will be addressed through their consultation with Strategies. Our new implementation date of the afterschool program is August of 2016.

#### **ACTION STEP STATUS**

With the exception of the afterschool program and the Differential Response, all Action Steps have occurred within the timeline as outlined in the SIP.

#### **METHOD OF EVALUATION AND/OR MONITORING**

This strategy will be measured by implementation and participation of new programs, or revitalizing old programs that were successful. Once programs are initiated, they will be monitored on a continual basis by program and participant surveys and focus groups. Program specific evidence based and evidence informed tools will be used to measure the success of those programs. The Task Force will be an on-going source of feedback for the use of existing programs and the need for enhancing or creating new programs and will be asked to meet at a minimum of one time a year.

#### **ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES (WHEN APPLICABLE)**

No additional Strategies have been created at this time.

#### **PROGRAM REDUCTION**

Not applicable.

The revised SIP Chart reflecting Strategies and Action Steps with changes and or documentation of success as described above can be found attached to this document [Attachment 1].

#### **OBSTACLES AND BARRIERS TO FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION**

As mentioned several times before, the FRC has been our only outside provider in Sierra County. We are still mending relationships and learning how to communicate. This has been a long difficult process, but it seems to be we are finally on our way to better communication and support on both sides. The implementation of a contract with Strategies is exciting for both the FRC and CPS. We are aware this consult will slow things down, but we are very eager to see possibilities come to fruition. In response to some of these barriers, we are reaching out to our community to help fill some of these program/services gaps. It is our hope that by reaching out and identifying more individuals and/or agencies our programs within the County will grow and will provide more options to our families and community.

#### **PROMISING PRACTICES/ OTHER SUCCESSES**

Sierra County has for the first time in a long time felt success and pride in the SIP process. Including stakeholders and actively listening to them is vital to this success and will continue to be important. In addition to celebrating the success of Strategies and Action Steps, the new relationships and the rebuilding of old relationships is an accomplishment in itself.

Sierra County is growing in programs, relationships and in staff capacity. The Sierra County Social Worker Supervisor is a master's level social worker and has experience from another state, another county and was a CSOAB consultant for the State. She is also currently an instructor for the RTA Core for Social Workers. A social worker was hired in August of 2015. She holds a LMFT. There are two other individuals who work for Sierra County currently working toward an MSW through Chico State. One of these staff is on the CPS team. There is currently a position open and has not yet been filled.

Sierra County CPS has begun dedicated work with Behavioral Health, MHSA and Public Health. This participation overlaps with providing direct service, working jointly on public community committees and designing programs and services to accommodate the SIP, the Mental Health Services Act Plan and Public Health Outreach.

Sierra County acknowledges limited resources available to families in our community. This includes limited providers, services and programs. Sierra County recognizes the potential of individuals within our community who may be able to provide services, yet not be connected to an agency. It is our goal to increase capacity of existing providers while supporting the opportunity to develop new providers. We wish to create new programs and possibly new agencies that are able to provide desired services. We embrace the opportunity to grow as a community.

Sierra County H&HS is discussing many things which will change the perception the community has of our agency and programs. Sierra County H&HS Consultant Suzanne Nobles is facilitating staff meetings to discuss Sierra County "Visioning". We have begun with "in an ideal world" what would you want H&HS to strive for? How would you like H&HS to look or function in the future? What will success look like? This has been an all staff effort and has not only provided good conversation among staff, but honors and recognizes their value and partnership in all programs in the County.

### **OUTCOME MEASURES NOT MEETING STATE/NATIONAL STANDARDS**

Because we have a very small out-of-home care population, it can be difficult to maintain anonymity when identifying markers are utilized in analysis and report writing. Providing data which would include ethnic group, age group and/or gender could easily allow out-of-home care youth and individuals to be identified. It also can be difficult to recognize a trend or relevant data. For example the new Federal Outcome Measure P5: Placement Stability - "Of all children who enter foster care in a 12-month period, what is the rate of placement moves per day of foster care?" The national standard for this measure is performance less than or equal to 4.12 per 1,000 days in care. Currently our measure is 9.09. Throughout the time measured we have had three children in care. If all children had remained in care, it would have taken us a year before we would have seen any meaningful results. If permanency was achieved or a child moved to a concurrent placement, because of our low numbers, it would

appear to be negative moves when in fact they are positive. Providing the explanation of our current number in this report will make it possible to identify the children just based on demographic information.

## **CURRENT ANALYSIS OF FEDERAL OUTCOME DATA MEASURES**

The CDSS and UCB provide quarterly quantitative data reports generated by UCB-CCWIP from information collected through California's Child Welfare Administrative Data System (CWS/CMS). These quarterly reports can be accessed at the CCWIP website provided above or are available in a static report at the CSOAB website. The All County Letter (ACL) NO. 15-63 dated September 28, 2015, sent from California Children and Family Services Division addresses the change in Federal Data Outcome Measures. When the current Sierra County SIP was written, there were 17 Federal Data Outcome Measures. As explained, Sierra County has chosen to focus on Systemic Factors; however, we are responsible to monitor our Federal and State measures. The 17 measures have been replaced, updated, or eliminated and now consist of 7 data outcome measures. Sierra County has to be careful when providing data analysis due to the small number of children in CPS custody. If it is possible to maintain anonymity of families and children, we include a data analysis of National Standards in comparison to Sierra County data for Quarter 2, 2015. In times when we are not able to maintain anonymity, we will provide National Standard numbers and Sierra County data comparison numbers alone without an analysis. It should also be noted if a child/family case transfer to our County from another county, the time in care will also include the time in the sending county. Quarter 2, 2015, outcome data comparison measures are listed after the outcome description. This information was provided through data reports created using the CCWIP website<sup>2</sup>.

### **SAFETY**

- S1: Maltreatment in foster care: Of all children in foster care during a 12-month period, what is the rate of victimization per day of foster care? National Standard – < or equal to 8.50. Sierra County – 0.
- S2: Recurrence of maltreatment: Of all children who were victims of a substantiated or indicated maltreatment report during a 12-month reporting period, what percent were victims of another substantiated or indicated maltreatment report within 12 months of their initial report? National Standard – < or equal to 9.1. Sierra County – 0.

### **PERMANENCY**

- P1: Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care: Of all children who enter foster care in a 12-month period, what percent are discharged to permanency within 12 months of entering foster care? National Standard – > or equal to 40.5%. Sierra – 0.00%.

<sup>2</sup> Webster, D., Armijo, M., Lee, S., Dawson, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Putnam-Hornstein, E., King, B., Rezvani, G., Wagstaff, K., Sandoval, A., Yee, H., Xiong, B., Benton, C., Hoerl, C., & Romero, R. (2016). *CCWIP reports*. Retrieved 1/12/2016, from University of California at Berkeley California Child Welfare Indicators Project website. URL: <[http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb\\_childwelfare](http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare)>

- P2: Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12 to 23 months: Of all children in foster care on the first day of a 12-month period, who had been in foster care (in that episode) between 12 and 23 months, what percent discharged from foster care to permanency within 12 months of the first day of the period? > or equal to 43.6%. Sierra – 0.00%.
- P3: Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or longer: Of all children in foster care on the first day of a 12 month period who had been in foster care (in that episode) for 24 months or more, what percent discharged to permanency within 12 months of the first day of the 12 month period? National Standard – > or equal to 30.3%. Sierra – 0.00%.
- P4: Re-entry into foster care in 12 months: Of all children who enter foster care in a 12-month period who discharged within 12 months to reunification, live with relative, or guardianship, what percent re-entered foster care within 12 months of their discharge? National Standard – < or equal to 8.3%. Sierra – 0.00%.
- P5: Placement Stability: Of all children who enter foster care in a 12-month period, what is the rate of placement moves per day of foster care? National Standard < or equal to 4.12. Sierra 9.09. Throughout the time measured we have had three children in care. If all children had remained in care, it would have taken us a year before we would have seen any meaningful results. If permanency was achieved or a child moved to a concurrent placement, because of our low numbers, it would appear to be negative moves when in fact they are positive.

## State and Federally Mandated Child Welfare/Juvenile Probation Initiatives

Sierra County Probation does not participate in the Title IV-E program which allowed for their non-participation in the Peer Review Process [See CSA p. 4 & SIP Attachment 1]. If a placement were to occur, Probation could choose to use Title IV-E funding and a plan would be submitted. Probation input has been vital to the CSA and SIP. The Probation Department has hosted the Task Force meetings facilitated by CPS, MHSA and Eligibility. Their participation in this Task Force has been significant in this new stakeholder team process.

Sierra County has a plan addressing children identified to fall within the Katie A. subclass. This Plan is scheduled to be updated in June of 2016. A Katie A. Administrative Team was initiated. Administrative Team will meet following any referral from CPS to determine the Katie A. eligibility. A new referral form was implemented in September of 2015. For every child age five and older who is removed from the home, the social worker will make a referral to

Behavioral Health. A referral will be made for those under age five should behavior warrant an assessment for services or if the child is currently receiving Behavioral Health Services. All social workers, the Social Worker Supervisor and the Assistant Director of H&HS as well as the Behavior Health team members will attend assessment meetings which focus on new referrals, staff ongoing cases, and coordinate follow up/services for all open cases. Constant review of referrals and staffing of all cases will allow the leadership of both the CPS and Behavioral Health to determine any children/youth fall into any of the listed classifications:

- Children/youth who are receiving intensive Specialty Mental Health Services through a Wraparound Program or Full Service Partnership Program consistent with the Core Practice Model, but not claimed as Intensive Care Coordination (ICC) or Intensive Home-Based Mental Health Services (IHBS).
- Children/youth are receiving other intensive Specialty Mental Health Services, but not receiving ICC or IHBS.
- Children/youth are receiving services not listed as the two options above or ICC or IHBS.
- Children/youth who are not receiving any type of Specialty Mental Health Services.
- Children/youth who declined ICC or IHBS services.

Sierra County Behavioral Health Department has implemented Kings View Corporation for Electronic Health Record Information System and All Pay Sources Billing Services. This system will allow Sierra County to claim for ICC and IHBS services. At this time Sierra County H&HS is not a MediCal agency. The medical record software has been implementation since the completion of the SIP. We are continually improving processes to all us to become MediCal approved for Mental Health.

Like all counties in California, Sierra County is responsible for Case Reviews. ACL 15-77, data October 14, 2015, provides instructions on Case Review implementation. Sierra County has also chosen the implementation of the Case Review process to be a part of our Action Steps for Strategy 3: Initiate a Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement (QA/QI) Plan. The progress in this strategy and further planning is described above.

Sierra County has not had children identified as CSEC. RTA provided CSEC training in June of 2015. This training was open to the public. Participants included local EMT professionals, Behavioral Health Professionals, educators, CPS staff and local community members. The CPS social worker hired in August will be attending this training in January of 2016.



## Future Steps

As you review our SIP Chart, you will see the many things we have accomplished and are celebrating with our community. You will also see in collaboration with CSOAB and OCAP our implementation and completion dates do not span the five years of the SIP. Because we are working toward greater relationships, programs, and services for Sierra County, we want to ensure SIP Strategies and Action Steps are well thought out and signification for our community. Over the next year we will be meeting with stakeholders and community partners to determine new and more updated strategies and action steps to carry us through the five years of our SIP. We are excited to see the changes that are already evident due to our SIP as well as the excitement shared by those involved in planning and implementation.